



United in Excellence

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Dear Parents/Carers

I hope you and your family are well.

RR6 is aware that there is a degree of uncertainty surrounding the final grading systems for this year's examinations. However, at this moment in time, the final details surrounding the awarding of the grades has not been finalised by the exam boards. We are aware that this is a stressful time for our students and families and hopefully some of the details below will help you understand the process that will need to be followed to award a grade.

It is important to acknowledge that there is a fundamental difference to the awarding of grades when compared to last year. In 2020, schools were asked to predict what grades the students would have achieved if the examinations had taken place. This year, schools are being asked to base their grade on the information and testing that has taken place and award a grade based on the available evidence.

How will grades be awarded this summer?

Grades for GSEs and most other qualifications including BTECS and OCR Nationals will be based on a process involving teacher assessment against national standards, internal quality assurance by the school leadership team, and external quality assurance by the exam boards.

The national process defined by the Department for Education and the exams' regulator, Ofqual is as follows:

1. Teachers will **assess students against a national standard**, which will be **defined by the exam boards before the Easter break**. Their assessments will consist of a variety of short assessments and the marking of any relevant coursework.
2. Departments will submit grades which will be **quality assured by the school**. This internal quality assurance process will have to be signed off by the exam board to ensure it is rigorous and in line with national standards.
3. The schools results will be **quality assured externally** by the exam boards, which may include random sampling of our school's evidence.
4. If the exam boards are confident in our submitted results, **then the exam boards will award students their final grades**.
5. If students do not think their results are accurate, they will have the right to **appeal** in August.



Once the school receives the final guidance we will publish our final assessment procedures and the schedule of assessments that are due to take place in late April and May.

Finally, during lesson time next week we are planning to update the students on the current process so they are aware of the assessment procedures that they will have to undertake so they can maximise their grades.

If you have any queries about this process, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Jacqueline Hyland
Assistant Headteacher RR6

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How will teachers award the grades?

Teachers will review your son's performance using the guidance provided by the exam boards. Teachers will review the quality of the coursework submitted and your son will sit some assessments in late April and May. Where appropriate, additional information will be utilised by departments. For vocational qualifications a similar process will be followed and students will be awarded a grade based on the quality of work submitted.

2. So, do teachers award the grade?

Simply: no. The grade students achieve will start with their teacher's assessment of their performance across a range of evidence. This is against a nationally-defined standard, not the teacher's own opinion. This assessment is then subject to both internal and external quality assurance before the final grade is awarded by the exam body as usual.

3. Does this mean grades are decided by an algorithm?

No, unlike last year, students' grades will not be changed by a formula. The internal and external quality assurance measures will all be done by humans, not an algorithm. **There is no limit on the achievement of students, providing they have evidence that they are working at that grade.**

4. What about loss of learning / impact of Covid?

This year, teachers will only assess students on the content they have been taught because of the continued disruption of the pandemic. This means students will not be disadvantaged if they have been unable to complete the course. Grades can only be submitted if the school possesses the relevant evidence so it is important that your son engages in this assessment process.

5. My son receives additional support when he takes exams. Will this be taken in to account?

Students who would usually have additional support in exams will receive this in the assessments scheduled to take place in late April/May.

6. Will grades be different between different schools?

No, the standard against which teachers will be assessing students is set nationally by the exam boards. This is the standard that will be used during external quality assurance and appeals to ensure consistency and fairness across the system.

7. What evidence will be used?

Teachers are able to draw on a range of assessment evidences from across a student's study of the course, up until approximately the end of May. The exam boards are producing assessment materials that will be sent to us before Easter. Different departments may use different sources of evidence, and there is no requirement for any one type of assessment to be used – it's about a performance across a range of evidence. We are still awaiting exam boards to release their guidance and confirm the specific evidences that can be used in each department.